



CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY BOARD	AGENDA ITEM No: 1.11
3 JUNE 2020	PUBLIC REPORT

COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1. The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing corporate governance arrangements. At its meeting on 26 May 2020 it will be asked to comment on proposed revisions to the corporate complaints procedure for the Combined Authority and to make recommendations to the Board. This is a substantially revised document which now includes a Section 6 on withdrawal of complaints, dealing with vexatious and persistent complaints, and learning points within the complaints process.
- 1.2. A copy of the current policy showing the proposed revisions as tracked changed is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.3. The report to the Audit and Governance Committee can be viewed at:

<https://cambridgeshirepeterboroughcagov.cmis.uk.com/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/870/Committee/70/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>

Item 11 refers.

<u>DECISION REQUIRED</u>	
Lead Member:	Mayor James Palmer
Lead Officer:	Robert Parkin, Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer
Forward Plan Ref: n/a	Key Decision: No
The Combined Authority Board is recommended to:	Voting arrangements

<p>(a) Approve and adopt the complaints procedures subject, to any amendments made by the Audit and Governance Committee.</p> <p>(b) Notify the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman of its decision to approve and adopt the revised complaints procedures.</p> <p>(c) Note that the Monitoring Officer has delegated authority to make any changes recommended by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsmen or resulting from the Audit and Governance Committee's function to monitor the complaints procedures.</p>	<p>A simple majority of all members</p>
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2.0 CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has produced guidance to assist Combined Authorities to produce a complaints procedure which sets out the principles for creating a simple integrated complaints system.
- 2.2 The Ombudsman's guidance states with the creation or expansion of every combined authority, there is the opportunity, and the necessity, to create a simple, integrated complaints system that will be:
- better for the public
 - better for local accountability and scrutiny, and
 - better value for money
- 2.3 The guidance states that the design of complaints systems and procedures is a matter for each authority, but it sets out the key benchmarks authorities will want to use to ensure their complaints procedures are simple, fair and encourage organisational improvement. The draft revised complaints procedure has been produced in line with these principles.
- 2.4 Complaints will be used as a learning tool, with regular summary reports being submitted to the Combined Authority management team. An annual report will also be produced for scrutiny by the Audit and Governance Committee.

3.0 Legal Implications

- 3.1 The Monitoring Officer has a statutory duty to report any findings of maladministration to the Combined Authority Board. This means that the Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring complaints are dealt with effectively as part of their role.

4.2. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has previously written to the Monitoring Officer requesting details of the complaints procedure adopted by the Combined Authority. It is therefore a recommendation of this report that the Combined Authority Board notify the Ombudsman of any revisions made to the Complaints Policy.

4.0 APPENDICES

3.1 Appendix 1 – Corporate Complaints Procedure

<u>Background Papers</u>	<u>Location</u>
Principles of complaint handling in combined authorities and devolved settings by Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman	http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/advice-and-guidance/guidance-notes/principles-combined-authorities